

Budget and Transformation Panel

Thursday 14 October 2010

Cllr I Crozier	DUP(Chair)
Cllr D Browne	UUP
Cllr M Browne	SF
Cllr M Jones	All
Cllr P McCarthy	SDLP
Cllr R newton	DUP
P McNaney	Chief Executive
J Thompson	Director of Finance and Resources
A Hassard	Director of Parks and Leisure
S McNicholl (minutes)	Strategic Planning and Policy Manager

1. Estimates 2011/12

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the current position with respect to the financial estimates for 2011/12, including issues relating to departmental estimates, the capital programme and efficiency. Members discussed the information presented, together with future variables which might impact on final figures such as potential cuts in government funding.

Action Required:

Members agreed that the Director of Finance and Resources should:

- Submit a report on the revenue estimates to SP&R Committee on 22nd October, setting out the current level of the estimates and the variables which may come into play during the rate-setting process;
- Make recommendations to the Committee as to how Members will be engaged in finalising the revenue estimates for 2011/12.

2. Proposals for use of the underspend in 2010/11

The Director of Finance and Resources reminded Members that, as discussed previously with the Panel and SP&R Committee, there is a potential forecast underspend of £2.9million in 2010/11. Given the early stage of the year it was agreed that recommendations should be made as to how up to £1.9 million of this underspend should be utilised. She reminded the Panel that since this is an in-year underspend, proposed expenditure needed to be non-recurrent, maximise benefit to the 2011/12 rate-setting exercise by pulling expenditure forward or lowering the cost-base of the Council in 11/12 (invest to save) and that the expenditure must take place by 31st March 2011. Members considered proposals relating to targeted voluntary redundancy; energy savings; water savings at the zoo; investing in local places and dealing with derelict properties.

Action Required:

Members agreed that the Director of Finance and Resources should:

- Submit the recommendations on utilisation of the projected underspend to SP&R Committee together with a process for engaging Members in identifying opportunities to utilise the balance of the projected underspend before end March 2011.

3. Capital Programme

The Chief Executive outlined the key issues with respect to the capital programme, outlining the fact that there were three types of schemes – committed and funded; committed and unfunded and uncommitted and unfunded. He outlined the unfunded schemes listed and said that of these there were four which the Director of Property and Projects wished to have expedited due to either pressing health and safety issues, potential risk to funding or challenging timescales, these were: the Clement Wilson Park Bridge, the Waterworks/Westland MUGA, the Mary Peters track and reuse facilities at household recycling centres.

Action Required:

Members agreed that the Director of Property and Projects should:

- Submit a report on the capital programme to the SP&R Committee on 22nd October and in this report outline for Members the level of investment and subsequently expenditure growth required, to progress the unfunded projects listed. The Panel also recommended that there should be further engagement with Members on prioritisation of the capital programme.